

Amendments to the Specification

[0012] In one exemplary embodiment, a computer-implemented system for building a database of data describing individual bales of cotton available for sale includes a database storage device connected to a communications network for storing a database of bale identifications and associated fiber quality data, and a fiber quality measurement instrument located in a cotton gin for providing fiber quality data on bale classing samples cut from individual bales at a bale press substantially concurrently with the making up of cotton into individual bales. The fiber quality measurement instrument is connected to the communications network for uploading fiber quality data to the database storage device.

[0013] A related computer-implemented system for electronic commerce of bales of cotton comprises a database storage device connected to a communications network for storing the database of data describing individual bales of cotton, in particular, bale identifications and associated fiber quality data, as well as a fiber quality measurement instrument located in a cotton gin for providing fiber quality data on bale classing samples cut from individual bales at a bale press substantially concurrently with the making up of cotton into individual bales. Again, the fiber quality measurement instrument is connected to the communications network for uploading fiber quality data to the database storage device. The system for electronic commerce additionally includes a search engine connected via the communications network to interrogate the database to select bales having fiber qualities within specified ranges for a candidate buyer.

[0014] A corresponding computer-implemented method for building a database of bales of cotton available for sale comprises the steps of employing a fiber quality measurement instrument located in a cotton gin to provide fiber quality data on bale classing samples cut from individual bales at a bale press substantially concurrently with the making up of cotton

into individual bales, and then transmitting the fiber quality data via a communications network to a database storage device that stores the database of bale identifications and associated fiber quality data.

[0015] A corresponding computer-implemented method for electronic commerce of bales of cotton comprises the steps of employing a fiber quality measurement instrument located in a cotton gin to provide fiber quality data on bale classing samples cut from individual bales at a bale press substantially concurrently with the making up of cotton into individual bales, then transmitting the fiber quality data via a communications network to the database storage device that stores the database of bale identifications and associated fiber quality data, and finally employing the search engine connected via the communications network to interrogate the database to select bales having fiber qualities within specified ranges for the candidate buyer.